SUMMARY OF THE QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING JANUARY 23, 2001

The Quality Systems Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on January 23, 2001, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) The meeting was led by its chair, Mr. Scott Siders of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to discuss progress on International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17025 integration, the asbestos subcommittee, the microbiology subcommittee, revision to section D.1 of Appendix D of the NELAC Standard, the Performance-based Measurement System (PBMS) subcommittee, and the language concerning the continuing instrument calibration verification (CICV).*

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Siders called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

ISO 17025

Dr. Fred Siegelman reported that he was discussing with Ms. Jeanne Hankins the different ways that the Field Activities Committee is approaching the use of ISO 17025 language. Dr. Siegelman has discussed the issue with Mr. Gary Johnson of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), who is knowledgeable about ISO policies and advised that including references would be necessary instead of including exact text. The committee discussed the mechanics of parallel text editing, and Dr. Siegelman indicated that it may be time to form a subcommittee to work on the ISO 17025 issue. Mr. Siders indicated that this is the top priority for the committee, especially considering the March 19 deadline for having the chapter revised. Dr. George Kulasingam wondered if inclusion of the ISO 17025 language in parentheses and quotes would be acceptable.

ASBESTOS SUBCOMMITTEE

Dr. Kulasingam reported that electronic mail messages have been sent out, trying to set up a meeting at the end of January. There are currently two working documents from California that provide a starting point. The subcommittee may have proposed language available for the meeting in Salt Lake City, but should definitely at least have a discussion document in time for that meeting.

MICROBIOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE

The microbiology subcommittee had a teleconference concurrent with the January 23 Quality Systems Committee teleconference. The new teleconference schedule for this subcommittee has

been set up. The subcommittee is making progress on proposed changes from the interim meeting.

D.1 REVISIONS

Mr. Charlie Hooper has been working on revising D.1 based on the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB) and Department of Defense (DOD) comments, as well as comments from the floor at the Sixth NELAC Interim Meeting (NELAC 6i). After further discussion of the blank issue with Mr. Jeff Nielsen, he will send the revision to the committee for review.

PBMS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Siders has heard back from the subcommittee, identifying their priorities for incorporating additional flexibility. These priorities include the discussions of test methods, calibration, demonstration of capability, quality manuals, and mandatory quality control. Appendices C and D of the standard were identified as later priorities. Several committee members will serve as reviewers. The goal is to increase the flexibility included in Chapter 5 and make incremental changes consistent with the straw model.

CICV

Mr. Ray Frederici has been working on the revised wording, has discussed it with several people, and currently has a small group reviewing the suggested revision. He will send the next version to the committee for review. The current idea is to allow information from other types of quality control samples to be used to confirm that the slope of the calibration line has not changed and to allow additional flexibility in the approach. One issue, however, is that different types of samples have different criteria. Mr. Charlie Hooper pointed out that excursions from the acceptance criteria might be more difficult to attribute to a particular cause, such as the matrix or sample preparation, when different samples are used. The laboratories would be required to describe their approach in their standard operating procedures (SOPs) and would not be allowed to arbitrarily change their approach. Mr. Siders commented that the increased flexibility should be accompanied by additional safety nets.

QUESTION FROM MR. RICHARD SPINNER ON SURROGATES

Mr. Siders indicated Mr. Hooper has given feedback on the question raised by Mr. Spinner about whether surrogates are required when direct injection onto the column is done, such as in most HPLC procedures. He asked for any additional input from the committee because he plans to reply to the question this week.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2001, at 1:00 p.m. EST. Mr. Siders plans to schedule additional teleconferences between the February 8 and March 15 meetings.

Attachment A

ACTION ITEMS
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 23, 2001

Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1.	Finish the ISO 17025 comparison document (Siegelman and the rest of the committee)	
2.	Schedule additional teleconferences in February and March (Siders)	
3.	Complete revised language for Appendix D1 and send to the committee for their review (Hooper)	
4.	Complete revised language on continuing instrument calibration verification and send to the committee for their review (Frederici)	

Attachment B

PARTICIPANTS
QUALITY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 23, 2001

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